United Nations A/71/836/Add.5

General Assembly

Distr.: General
18 April 2017

Original: English

Seventy-first session
Agenda item 160 (b)
Financing of the United Nations peacekeeping forces in the Middle East: United Nations Interim Force in Lebanon

Budget performance of the United Nations Interim Force in Lebanon for the period from 1 July 2015 to 30 June 2016 and proposed budget for the United Nations Interim Force in Lebanon for the period from 1 July 2017 to 30 June 2018

Report of the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions

Appropriation for 2015/16	$506,346,400
Expenditure for 2015/16	$481,411,800
Underexpenditure for 2015/16	$24,934,600
Appropriation for 2016/17	$488,691,600
Projected expenditure for 2016/17[a]	$485,518,300
Projected underexpenditure for 2016/17	$3,173,300
Proposal submitted by the Secretary-General for 2017/18	$494,771,300
Recommendation of the Advisory Committee for 2017/18	$492,421,400

[a] Estimates as at 31 January 2017.

17-04062 (E) 200417

Please recycle

I. Introduction

1. **The recommendations of the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions contained in paragraphs 32, 33, 36, 45 and 51 below would entail a reduction of $2,349,900 to the proposed budget of the United Nations Interim Force in Lebanon (UNIFIL) for the period from 1 July 2017 to 30 June 2018 (A/71/765 and Corr.1).**

2. During its consideration of the financing of UNIFIL, the Advisory Committee met with representatives of the Secretary-General, who provided additional information and clarification, concluding with written responses received on 7 April 2017. The documents reviewed and those used for background by the Committee are listed at the end of the present report. The Committee's detailed comments and recommendations on the findings of the Board of Auditors on the United Nations peacekeeping operations for the period from 1 July 2015 to 30 June 2016 and on cross-cutting issues related to peacekeeping operations can be found in its related reports (A/71/845 and A/71/836). The Board's observations and recommendations pertaining specifically to UNIFIL are discussed in paragraph 6 below.

II. Budget performance report for the period from 1 July 2015 to 30 June 2016

3. By its resolution 69/302, the General Assembly appropriated an amount of $506,346,400 gross ($494,372,800 net) for the maintenance of the Force for the period from 1 July 2015 to 30 June 2016. Expenditures for the period totalled $481,411,800 gross ($469,200,600 net), reflecting a budget implementation rate of 95.1 per cent. The resulting unencumbered balance of $24,934,600, in gross terms, represents 4.9 per cent of the appropriation.

4. A detailed analysis of variances is provided in section IV of the performance report for the period from 1 July 2015 to 30 June 2016 (A/70/640). Lower than budgeted expenditures were incurred under:

(a) Military contingents ($22,846,100, or 6.8 per cent), attributable mainly to a higher actual average vacancy rate of 29.7 per cent compared with the budgeted rate of 26.5 per cent and corresponding reduced requirements for rations, as well as lower requirements for travel on rotation attributable to a new charter contract with a reduced rate for flight hours and savings resulting from the implementation of reversed rotation of troops (see para. 20 below);

(b) Communications ($3,455,700, or 50.8 per cent), attributable mainly to the requirements for the rental of radar equipment ($2 million) being recorded under air transportation instead of under communications, and provision of Internet services being recorded under information technology services instead of under communications, as well as lower requirements for fixed and mobile phone services, offset in part by additional requirements for the acquisition of communications and satellite equipment to support the United Nations enterprise resource planning system, Umoja;

(c) Facilities and infrastructure ($1,313,000, or 7.2 per cent), attributable mainly to: (i) the non-implementation of the outsourcing of maintenance services for buildings and generators which was found to be costlier than the provision of those services in-house; and (ii) reduced costs for petrol, oil and lubricants due to the lower actual average cost of fuel for generators ($0.41 per litre) than the budgeted rate ($0.75 per litre). The reduced requirements were offset in part by additional requirements for prefabricated units, air-conditioning systems and generators;

(d) Naval transportation ($1,076,800, or 3.4 per cent) attributable mainly to lower than budgeted charges for the rental and operation of vessels due to the provision of a fast patrol boat in lieu of a corvette sea vessel and a lower than planned number of flight hours (193 hours instead of 769) for navy helicopters attached to a mothership due to the impact of severe weather conditions on naval air operations in the third and fourth quarters of the period. The Advisory Committee recalls that in the 2014/15 period a total number of 271 actual flight hours were recorded against 850 planned hours owing to severe weather conditions that hampered naval air operations (see A/70/571, expected accomplishment 1.1: Stable and secure environment in southern Lebanon);

(e) International staff ($1,040,100, or 2.1 per cent), attributable mainly to a lower actual common staff cost rate of 66.5 per cent of net salaries compared with the budgeted rate of 69.9 per cent, offset in part by a lower actual average vacancy rate of 8.4 per cent, compared with the budgeted rate of 10.0 per cent;

(f) National staff ($908,800, or 2.0 per cent), attributable mainly to: (i) a lower actual common staff cost rate of 34.1 per cent of net salaries compared with the budgeted rate of 40.0 per cent; and (ii) higher actual average vacancy rates of 41.2 per cent and 5.7 per cent for National Professional Officers and national General Service staff respectively compared with the budgeted rates of 30.0 and 5 per cent, due to delays in the classification of newly nationalized posts (17 National Professional Officer and 11 national General Service posts) in the context of the civilian staffing review;

(g) Ground transportation ($744,700, or 13.8 per cent), attributable mainly to the lower actual average cost of fuel ($0.41 per litre) than the budgeted rate ($0.75 per litre), as well as lower (4.9 million litres) than budgeted (5.1 million litres) consumption of fuel as a result of optimization in the usage of the fleet, offset in part by additional requirements for the replacement of 3 vehicles and the acquisition of 2 palletized load vehicles for the movement of specialized equipment and heavy vehicles;

(h) Medical ($386,100, or 30.7 per cent), attributable mainly to the lower than expected number of patients who were referred to hospitals, the lower costs of medical supplies and the non-procurement of some medical supplies because of delays by some contractors;

(i) Other supplies, services and equipment ($276,300, or 7.2 per cent), attributable mainly to lower requirements for freight costs as a result of procurement of large quantities and a reduction of inter-mission shipments, reduced requirements for training fees for certain courses and lower requirements for uniforms, badges and safety gear, offset in part by additional requirements for individual contractors for camp cleaning services and loss on exchange rate transactions;

(j) Official travel ($97,000, or 10.0 per cent), attributable mainly to higher adherence to the 16-day advance purchase travel rule and to the greater use of video/teleconferences in lieu of travel.

5. The lower requirements were partly offset by higher requirements under:

(a) Information technology ($4,102,400, or 85.5 per cent), attributable mainly to: (i) the replacement of communications equipment that had exceeded its life expectancy through the reprioritization of resources from the facilities and infrastructure and naval transportation classes during the 2015/16 period; (ii) acquisition of barcode readers to enable the roll-out of the electronic rations management system; (iii) upgrade of satellite equipment; and (iv) requirements for the provision of Internet services being budgeted under communications but recorded under information technology;

(b) Air transportation ($2,983,900, or 62.5 per cent), attributable mainly to the requirements for $2 million for the rental of radar equipment budgeted under communications but being recorded under air transportation, and a higher than budgeted fixed cost of utilization of the Mi-8 helicopter as a result of a new contract, offset in part by the lower actual average cost of fuel ($0.41 per litre) than the budgeted rate ($0.75 per litre);

(c) General temporary assistance ($83,700, or 100 per cent), attributable to the costs allocated to UNIFIL in relation to Umoja, the decommissioning of Galileo[1] and the mission post classification exercise;

(d) Consultants ($41,400 or 100 per cent) attributable to the costs allocated to UNIFIL for the Senior Mission Administration and Resource Training programme and consulting fees for environment-related consultancies on wastewater sampling.

Observations and recommendations of the Board of Auditors

6. In considering the reports of the Secretary-General on the financing of UNIFIL, the Advisory Committee also had before it the report of the Board of Auditors on the accounts of the United Nations peacekeeping operations for the financial period ended 30 June 2016 (A/71/5 (Vol. II), chap. II). In its report, the Board made observations and recommendations pertaining to UNIFIL on the following matters:

(a) *Cut-off regarding travel expenses*: the Board noted that travel expenses pertaining to the financial year 2016/17 had been charged in the financial year 2015/16 and recommended that internal communication be strengthened to ensure that errors having an impact on the financial statements are communicated to the Accounts Division (ibid., paras. 50-52);

(b) *Budget formulation and management*: the Board noted underspending of 5 per cent or more between appropriation and expenditure for military and police personnel (ibid., table 8 and para. 64);

(c) *Idle stock*: the Board noted that 83 items had not been used for more than one year resulting in a blockage of funds of $2.10 million and that 602 expendable items purchased at least one year earlier for $2.1 million had not been used at all, and expressed its view that UNIFIL should optimize inventory management to prevent idle stocking and non-utilization of property (ibid., para. 124);

(d) *Special flight requests*: the Board noted that, of a total of 446 special flight requests, 104 requests (not including requests for emergency or test flights) had been submitted fewer than two working days in advance and were not in compliance with the standard operating procedure on aviation operations (ibid., para. 149);

(e) *Quick impact projects*: the Board noted administrative delays in providing approval and funding of such projects and recommended that UNIFL ensure the timely approval and release of funds for quick-impact projects so that the purposes of such projects can be optimally served (ibid., paras. 387 and 390);

[1] Legacy system used for inventory management in peacekeeping missions, initially interfaced to Umoja during the deployment of Umoja Foundation and Extension 1, and currently being migrated to Umoja as part of the implementation of supply chain management in the Umoja Extension 2 phase The decommissioning of the Galileo system involves: (a) cleansing and enriching Galileo data substantially to conform to Umoja requirements; and (b) enhancing Umoja supply chain management to ensure that the entire Galileo functionality is fully replaced before the full deployment of supply chain management in the field (see A/66/381, para. 30, and A/71/390, para. 71).

(f) *Status of assessed contributions receivable*: the Board noted an increase of $69.9 million in unpaid assessed contributions to UNIFIL (ibid., para. 7).

The Advisory Committee expects UNIFIL to take prompt action to address the issues raised by the Board of Auditors.

7. The comments of the Advisory Committee on the information presented in the performance report on individual objects of expenditure can be found, where relevant, in the discussion of the proposed budget for the period from 1 July 2017 to 30 June 2018 (A/71/765 and Corr.1) in the paragraphs below.

III. Information on performance for the current period

8. The Advisory Committee was informed that, as at 16 February 2017, a total of $8,439,033,000 had been assessed on Member States in respect of UNIFIL since its inception. Payments received as at the same date amounted to $8,332,980,000, leaving an outstanding balance of $106,053,000. As at 3 April 2017, the Force had available cash resources of $264,209,000. Taking into account the three-month operating reserve of $53,064,000, the remaining cash balance was $211,145,000.

9. The Advisory Committee was also informed that, as at 31 March 2017, the incumbency for the Mission was as follows:

	Authorized approved[a] *2016/17*	*Encumbered*	*Vacancy rate (percentage)*
Military and police personnel			
Military contingents	15 000	10 453	30.3
Civilian personnel			
International staff	254	240	5.5
National staff	646	581	10.1

[a] Represents the highest authorized strength for military and police personnel and the number of approved posts for civilian personnel.

10. The Advisory Committee was provided with the current and projected expenditures for the period from 1 July 2016 to 30 June 2017, with the reasons for variances. Expenditures for the period as at 1 February 2017 amounted to $312,136,600 (gross). At the end of the current financial period, the estimated total expenditures would amount to $485,518,300 against the appropriation of $488,691,600, leaving a projected unencumbered balance of $3,173,300 (0.6 per cent). **The Advisory Committee requests that the most up-to-date information on the current and projected expenditures for the Mission be provided to the General Assembly at the time of its consideration of the budget proposal for 2017/18.**

IV. Proposed budget for the period from 1 July 2017 to 30 June 2018

A. Mandate and planning assumptions

11. The mandate of UNIFIL was established by the Security Council in its resolutions 425 (1978) and 426 (1978). The most recent extension of the mandate

was authorized by the Council in its resolution 2305 (2016), in which the Council decided to extend the mandate until 31 August 2017.

12. The main priorities for the 2017/18 period are summarized in paragraphs 6 to 14 of the report of the Secretary-General (A/71/765 and Corr.1). These include: (a) maintaining a credible force and an effective force for deterrence, prevention and de-escalation of conflict; (b) enhancing liaison and coordination activities at the strategic level, in particular through the tripartite mechanism; (c) widening the scope of the strategic partnership of the Force with the Lebanese Armed Forces as a key element to support moves towards a permanent ceasefire; (d) further involving the Government of Lebanon, in particular through its ministries and security institutions, in the implementation of resolution 1701 (2006) in southern Lebanon; and (e) maintaining maritime support for the Lebanese navy (ibid., para. 6).

13. With regard to the support component, it is indicated in the proposed budget that UNIFIL will continue to provide support to all components of the Force through the provision of a full range of services at 55 locations and at its headquarters in Naqoura. The Force will also continue to operate one main support route and routes through coastal waters, utilizing a commercially contracted sea vessel, and draw on a number of standing contractual arrangements for rations and fuel support. It is further indicated that, as a result of a survey, proposals have been included for making improvements in the living conditions for troops, including the replacement of prefabricated units, furniture, refrigerators, air conditioners and generators (ibid., para. 10).

14. It is indicated that UNIFIL will continue to perform liaison functions in Beirut on the management of issues relating to the status-of-forces agreement, the exportation and importation of goods and services, the transit of material and personnel, as well as coordination with the Government and other United Nations offices (ibid., para. 10; see also para. 27 below).

15. Information on regional mission cooperation is provided in paragraphs 15 to 18 of the proposed budget for 2017/18. It is indicated that UNIFIL will continue to provide training to other missions and entities[2] and lead the coordination of requests for training support on behalf of the region to minimize duplication of initiatives. Furthermore, the Regional Information and Communications Technology Services will continue efforts to reduce service disparities among the missions in the region,[3] while seeking economies of scale and eliminating duplication of effort.

16. The proposed budget also includes information on partnerships and country team coordination. It is indicated that UNIFIL will continue to coordinate regular consultations at all levels with the Office of the United Nations Special Coordinator for Lebanon, maintain a high level of coordination with humanitarian agencies, expand its collaboration with other United Nations entities such as the United Nations Development Programme, the United Nations Children's Fund and the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations, liaise with the Government of Lebanon and with civil society organizations and hold regular coordination

[2] Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia, Office of the Special Envoy of the Secretary-General for Syria, Office of the United Nations Special Coordinator for Lebanon, United Nations Assistance Mission for Iraq, United Nations Assistance Mission in Afghanistan, United Nations Interim Security Force for Abyei, United Nations Military Observer Group in India and Pakistan, United Nations Office for Project Services, United Nations Organization Stabilization Mission in the Democratic Republic of the Congo, United Nations Peacekeeping Force in Cyprus (UNFICYP) and United Nations Truce Supervision Organization (UNTSO).

[3] Office of the United Nations Special Coordinator for Lebanon, Office of the United Nations Special Coordinator for the Middle East Peace Process, UNIFIL, United Nations Disengagement Observer Force (UNDOF), UNFICYP and UNTSO.

meetings with municipalities on a range of issues of importance to the local communities (ibid., paras. 19-21).

B. Resource requirements

17. The proposed budget for UNIFIL for the period from 1 July 2017 to 30 June 2018 amounts to $494,771,300 representing an increase of $6,079,700, or 1.2 per cent, compared with the apportionment for 2016/17. The increased requirements are mostly related to: (a) military contingents, attributable primarily to the application of a higher rate of reimbursement to troop-contributing countries of $1,410 per month from 1 July 2017, set by the General Assembly in its resolution 68/281, compared with the rate of $1,365 applied in 2016/17, reflecting a rate increase of $45; (b) national staff, attributable to the fact that a number of staff are long-serving and higher in grade; (c) facilities and infrastructure, attributable primarily to higher estimated costs for generator fuel; and (d) air operations, attributable primarily to additional requirements for the rental of helicopters, including estimates for guaranteed fleet cost and total flight hour cost, based on expenditure patterns and current contractual rates, as well as fuel for air operations.

18. Information on the financial resources proposed and an analysis of variances is provided in sections II and IV of the proposed budget (A/71/765 and Corr.1).

1. Military and police personnel

Category	*Authorized 2016/17*	*Proposed 2017/18*	*Variance*
Military contingent personnel[a]	15 000	15 000	–

[a] Represents the highest level of authorized strength.

19. The requested resources for military contingent personnel for 2017/18 amount to $327,789,100, reflecting an increase of $1,183,800 or 0.4 per cent compared with the appropriation for 2016/17. It is indicated that the proposed increase for 2017/18 is attributable primarily to the impact of the increase in the rate of reimbursement for standard troop costs from an amount of $1,365 applied to the budget for the 2016/17 period to $1,410 as set by the General Assembly in its resolution 68/281. The increase would be offset in part by reduced requirements for: (a) travel on rotation owing to a reduced rate for flight hours in the new air charter contract; (b) the implementation of a reversed rotation arrangement for troops (see para. 20 below); (c) lower requirements for rations due to the improved monitoring of inventory; (d) reduced requirements for contingent-owned equipment due to updated estimates related to signed memorandums of understanding; and (e) the estimated adjustment related to deductions for non-deployment, delayed deployment or deployment of non-functional contingent-owned equipment against troop reimbursement costs, in line with Assembly resolution 67/261 (A/71/765 and Corr.1, para. 84).

20. The Secretary-General indicates that efficiency gains resulting from the reversed rotation of troops and from the monitoring of baggage and cargo loading operations for troops are estimated at $2,466,600 and $616,600 respectively (A/71/765 and Corr.1, para. 71). Upon enquiry, the Advisory Committee was provided with further information on the concept of reversed rotation, which is attached as an annex to the present report. The Committee recalls that the Secretary-General's budget proposals for 2016/17 also indicated that the cost estimates had taken into account estimated efficiency gains of $1,400,000 resulting from the reversed rotation of troops and $316,800 from the monitoring of rations (A/70/699,

para. 83; see also A/49/644, annex II). **The Advisory Committee trusts that information on the actual efficiency gains realized through the efficiency initiatives will be included in the relevant performance report for UNIFIL. The Advisory Committee further trusts that such information will be provided in the budget and performance reports of all missions using reversed rotation of troops.** Upon enquiry, the Advisory Committee was informed that the concept of reverse rotation is considered for application in other missions on a case-by-case basis.

21. **The Advisory Committee recommends approval of the resources requested for military and police personnel.**

2. Civilian personnel

Category	*Approved 2015/16*	*Proposed 2017/18*	*Variance*
International staff	254	254	–
National staff[a]	646	645	(1)
General temporary assistance	2	2	–
Total	**902**	**901**	**(1)**

[a] Includes National Professional Officers and national General Service staff.

22. The estimated requirements for civilian personnel for 2017/18 amount to $94,985,000, reflecting an increase of $2,633,100, or 2.9 per cent, compared with the appropriation for 2016/17. The Secretary-General indicates that the increase is mainly attributable to additional requirements under: (a) international staff ($494,300, or 1.0 per cent), owing to the application of a vacancy rate of 3.0 per cent compared with 5.0 per cent in 2016/17, and a revised salary scale; and (b) national staff ($2,281,500, or 9.0 per cent) attributable to higher estimated staff costs for National Professional Officers and national General Service staff than budgeted for the 2016/17 period due to the fact that a number of national staff are long-serving and higher in grade (see para. 24 below), offset in part by the proposed abolishment of one national General Service post and conversion of six National Professional Officer posts to national General Service posts.

23. The estimated requirements for civilian personnel for the period from 1 July 2017 to 30 June 2018 include an amount of $411,200 for general temporary assistance, reflecting an increase of $3,200, or 0.8 per cent, compared with the appropriation for 2016/17 under that category. The proposed resources would provide for the continuation of two international temporary assistance positions in the Joint Mission Analysis Centre (see A/71/765 and Corr.1, table 1).

Civilian staffing review

24. With reference to the civilian staffing review conducted in September 2013 (see A/71/765 and Corr.1, sect. VI.A, p. 47, concerning para. 20 of General Assembly resolution 70/286), the Advisory Committee was informed that during the course of its implementation over the three-year period commencing in 2014, UNIFIL had abolished a total of 146 positions and nationalized 52 positions. As a result of the reduction in staffing resources, the duties and responsibilities formerly undertaken by international staff were absorbed by the remaining personnel and additional responsibility and accountability was transferred to the new national positions to continue to achieve operational requirements. In this context, some of the nationalized positions had been classified at a higher level to reflect their additional supervisory

functions, duties and accountability, commensurate with their overall level of responsibility.

Recommendations on posts and positions

25. The number of civilian posts and positions proposed for 2017/2018 would represent a reduction from a total of 902 in 2016/17 to 901, comprising 254 international and 645 national staff and two positions funded through general temporary assistance. The Secretary-General proposes the following post changes for 2017/18:

(a) Abolishment of one Finance Assistant post (national General Service) in the Finance and Budget Management Section as a result of the streamlining of certain finance functions following the deployment of Umoja (see A/71/765 and Corr.1, para. 37; see also para. 28 below);

(b) Conversion of six National Professional Officer posts to national General Service posts (3 Security Officers, 1 Information Systems Officer, 1 Human Resources Officer and 1 Electrician) following the finalization of the mission post classification exercise for UNIFIL in July 2016 in relation to the civilian staffing review conducted in September 2013 (see para. 24 above; see also para. 28 below).

26. The Secretary-General also proposes a number of organizational changes and redeployments, as follows:

(a) The transfer of the Gender Affairs Unit comprising two Gender Affairs Officers (1 P-4 post and 1 National Professional Officer post) and one Team Assistant (national General Service) post from the Civil Affairs Section to the Office of the Head of Mission/Force Commander. The Secretary-General states that this is in line with the global study on the implementation of Security Council resolution 1325 (2000) and the report of the Secretary-General on women and peace and security (S/2015/716);

(b) Redeployment of one Political Affairs Officer post (P-4) from the Beirut Office to Naqoura headquarters to allow for better integration of teams. The Secretary-General indicates that the requirements of the Beirut Office will be covered from Naqoura headquarters through rotation;

(c) Redeployment of the Tripartite Coordination Unit with two posts (1 Senior Political Affairs Officer and 1 Political Affairs Officer) from Beirut to Naqoura. The Secretary-General indicates that this would enable better synergy with the Political Affairs Section and a better coordination of efforts between the military and civilian components of the Mission.

27. From table 4 of the proposed budget, the Advisory Committee notes that, as a result of the above post redeployments (see para. 26 above), the overall staffing of the Beirut Office would be reduced from six to three posts. Upon enquiry, the Advisory Committee was informed that the Beirut Office would continue to manage all administrative matters related to the status-of-forces agreement, mission protocol and immigration issues in Beirut, tax exemptions, and customs formalities for all incoming and outgoing consignments for the Mission headquarters as well as for UNIFIL's military personnel. The Beirut Office would also continue to facilitate the Head of Mission's regular meetings in Beirut with a wide range of political and diplomatic interlocutors as well as other partner agencies, all of which are based in Beirut. In addition, the Office would continue to provide ongoing administrative and logistical support to missions and offices in Lebanon and in the region, including UNDOF, UNTSO, the Office of the United Nations Special Coordinator for Lebanon and the Office of Special Envoy of the Secretary-General for Syria.

28. In addition, as indicated in paragraph 11 of the proposed budget, the Secretary-General proposes to implement a two-pillar structure for the mission support component of UNIFIL comprising a supply chain pillar headed by the Office of the Deputy Director of Mission Support and a service delivery pillar under the Regional Information and Communications Technology Services. The Secretary-General states that this is in accordance with the final results of the mission's post classification exercise and the principles of the global field support strategy. The implementation of the two-pillar structure involves: (a) the transfer of the Engineering Services Section with 136 posts and the Medical Section with 14 posts from the Office of the Deputy Director of Mission Support to the Regional Information and Communications Services; and (b) the regrouping of the Movement Control, Transport and Aviation Sections under a new Movements Section within the supply chain pillar. In addition to the above-mentioned reclassification of six National Professional Officer posts as national General Service posts and the abolishment of one Finance Assistant post (national General Service) (see para. 25 above), the implementation of the two-pillar structure under the mission support component also involves the reassignment of 19 posts. The posts proposed for abolishment, redeployment, reclassification and reassignment in the support component are listed, by section, in tables 2 to 25 of the proposed budget; information on the proposed post changes is provided in paragraphs 24 to 69 of the proposed budget (A/71/765 and Corr.1).

29. With regard to reassignment of posts, the Advisory Committee notes that the definition given in annex I to the report of the Secretary-General states that post reassignment is applied when: (a) an approved post that was intended to cover a certain function is proposed to implement other priority mandated activities unrelated to the original function; and (b) that while a post reassignment may involve a change of location or office, it does not change the category or level of the position.

30. The Advisory Committee is of the view that eight of the 19 posts proposed for reassignment do not appear to adhere the above definition, including the proposed reassignment of: (a) one Deputy Director of Mission Support (D-1) post as one Deputy Director of Mission Support and Chief of Supply Chain Management (D-1) in the immediate Office of the Deputy Director of Mission Support (see A/71/765 and Corr.1, para. 40); (b) one Transport Assistant (Field Service) post as one Supply Assistant (Field Service) post from the Transport Section to the Supply Chain Section (ibid., para. 47); (c) one Vehicle Technician (Field Service) post as one Supply Assistant (Field Service) post within the Supply Chain Section (ibid., para. 53); (d) one Chief of Information and Communications Technology Services (D-1) post as one Chief, Regional Information and Communications Technology Services (D-1) post under the Regional Information and Communications Technology Services/service delivery pillar (ibid., para. 61); (e) one Equipment Technician (national General Service) post as one Information Systems Assistant (national General Service) post under the Regional Information and Communications Technology Services/service delivery pillar (ibid., para. 62); (f) one Engineer (P-3) post as an Electrical Engineer (P-3) post in the Engineering Services Section (ibid., table 24); (g) one Water and Sanitation Engineer (P-3) post as one Engineer (P-3) post in the Engineering Services Section (ibid., para. 66); and (h) one Heating, Ventilation and Air Conditioning Technician (national General Service) post as an Electrician (national General Service) post in the Engineering Services Section (ibid., para. 66). **While the Advisory Committee recognizes the need for the functions and priority activities of the above eight posts and recommends their continuation, it is of the view that there is a need to reassess whether they can be considered as post reassignments.**

31. The remaining 11 proposed post reassignments involve a change of functions. In the Advisory Committee's view, such reassignments should be considered equivalent to the abolishment of a current post and establishment of a new post, and therefore subject to procedures applicable to new posts with respect to, inter alia, the requirement for full justification of their functions, the recruitment and selection process and the application of a vacancy factor of 50 per cent in the first year of their establishment.

32. The Advisory Committee is of the view that sufficient justification was provided for the new functions of only some of the 11 posts proposed for reassignment involving a change of functions. These include the proposed reassignment of: (a) one Language Assistant (national General Service) post as one Movement Control Assistant (national General Service) post from the immediate Office of the Deputy Director of Mission Support to the Movements Control Section (ibid., para. 42); and (b) one Rations Assistant (national General Service) post as one Staff Assistant (national General Service) post form the Supply Chain Section to the immediate Office of the Deputy Director of Mission Support (ibid., para. 43). **In view of the foregoing, the Advisory Committee recommends approval of the proposed reassignment of the above two posts with the application of a vacancy factor of 50 per cent during the first year of the reassignment. Any related operational costs should be adjusted as appropriate.**

33. The remaining nine posts comprise the following: (a) one Team Assistant (national General Service) post as a Supply Assistant (national General Service) post from the Security Section to the Supply Chain Section (ibid., para. 33); (b) one Administrative Assistant (national General Service) post as one Rations Assistant (national General Service) post from the immediate Office of the Director of Mission Support to the Supply Chain Section (ibid., para. 35); (c) two Team Assistant (national General Service) posts, one Electrician (national General Service) post and one Language Assistant (national General Service) post as four Facilities Management Assistant (national General Service) posts from the Engineering Services Section to the Events Unit in the immediate Office of the Deputy Director of Mission Support and Supply Chain (ibid., para. 41 and table 24); (d) two Language Assistant (national General Service) posts as two Contingent-Owned Equipment Assistant posts (national General Service) from the immediate Office of the Deputy Director of Mission Support to the Contingent-Owned Equipment Unit of the Supply Chain Section (ibid., para. 44); and (e) one Administrative Assistant (national General Service) post as one Supply Assistant (national General Service) post from the Movements Section to the Supply Chain Section (ibid., para. 55). **The Advisory Committee is of the view that insufficient justification was provided in the proposed budget in support of the new functions and priority activities of the above posts, and therefore recommends abolishment of the above nine posts proposed for reassignment. Any related operational costs should be adjusted as appropriate.**

34. The Advisory Committee discusses the issue of the reassignment of posts further in its report on cross-cutting issues related to peacekeeping operations (A/71/836).

Vacancy rates

35. Information on vacancy rates for international staff shown in the table below paragraph 72 of the proposed budget shows that an actual vacancy rate of 8.4 per cent was recorded for 2015/16, a budgeted rate of 5.0 per cent was applied for 2016/17, and a rate of 3.0 per cent is proposed for 2017/18. As indicated in the table below paragraph 9 above, the actual vacancy rate for international staff as at 31 March 2017 was 5.5 per cent. The Advisory Committee was further informed that the actual average vacancy rate for international staff for the seven-month

period from 1 July 2016 to 31 January 2017 was 5.9 per cent. The table below provides a summary of the approved, actual, actual average and proposed vacancy rates for international staff for the performance, current and budget periods.

	2015/16		2016/17			2017/18	
			Actual				
Staff category	*Approved*	*Actual*	*Approved*	*Average, 1 July 2016–31 January 2017*	*As at 31 March 2017*	*Budgeted*	*Proposed number of personnel*
International staff	10.0	8.4	5.0	5.9	5.5	3.0	254

36. **The Advisory Committee is of the view that the proposed vacancy rate of 3 per cent for international staff in the 2017/18 period is not realistic. The Committee reiterates its view that budgeted vacancy rates should be based, as much as possible, on actual vacancy rates. In cases where the proposed budgeted rates differ from the actual rates at the time of the budget preparation, clear justification should be provided in related budget documents for the rates used. In view of the foregoing, the Committee recommends application of a vacancy rate of 5.5 per cent to estimate the requirements for international staff for the 2017/18 period. Any related operational costs should be adjusted as appropriate. The Advisory Committee expects that all vacant posts and positions will be filled expeditiously.**

37. **Subject to its recommendations in paragraphs 32, 33 and 36 above, the Advisory Committee recommends approval of the Secretary-General's proposals for civilian staff.**

3. Operational costs

(United States dollars)

Apportioned 2016/17	*Proposed 2017/18*	*Variance*
69 734 400	71 997 200	2 262 800

38. The estimated operational requirements for the 2017/18 period amount to $71,997,200, reflecting an increase of $2,262,800, or 3.2 per cent, compared with the appropriation for the 2016/17 period. The increase is attributable mainly to higher requirements under air operations ($3,262,700, or 71.3 per cent), facilities and infrastructure ($950,800, or 7.5 per cent), official travel ($281,000, or 32.9 per cent), naval transportation ($129,200, or 0.4 per cent) and consultants ($100,900, or 100 per cent). The increased requirements would be offset in part by lower requirements under other supplies, services and equipment ($1,846,500, or 31.9 per cent), communications ($385,400, or 11.3 per cent), information technology ($163,700, or 3.7 per cent) and ground transportation ($79,600, or 1.8 per cent).

Air operations

39. The proposed resources for air operations amount to $7,840,900, reflecting an increase of $3,262,700 (71.3 per cent) compared with the apportionment of $4,578,200 for 2016/17. The Secretary-General indicates that the increased requirements are attributable primarily to: (a) the inclusion of provisions for the rental of radar equipment, previously budgeted under other supplies, services and equipment, reflecting the fact that the radar is used for air transportation; and

(b) additional requirements for the rental of helicopters, including estimates for the guaranteed fleet cost and total flight hour cost, based on expenditure patterns.

40. With regard to the requirements for the rental and operation of helicopters, the Advisory Committee was informed, upon enquiry, that the estimates for 2017/18 were based on a cost per flight hour of $2,200, representing the actual cost per hour of the Bell helicopter compared with a rate of $1,277 applied in the 2016/17 period. The Committee was further informed that the estimated cost per flight hour of $2,200 included in the proposed budget for the 2017/18 period is based on the terms outlined in the existing letter of assist and reflected anticipated operational requirements. The estimated cost of $1,277 per flight hour included in the approved budget for the 2016/17 period reflected anticipated efficiencies associated with operational utilization. **The Advisory Committee is of the view that further clarification is required, and trusts that detailed information on the planned and actual utilization of helicopters and planned and actual efficiency gains achieved will be provided in the performance report for the 2016/17 period.**

Facilities and infrastructure

41. The proposed resources for facilities and infrastructure for 2017/18 amount to $13,647,300, reflecting an increase of $950,800 (7.5 per cent) compared with the apportionment of $12,696,500 for 2016/17. As indicated in the proposed budget, the increased requirements relate to the replacement of generators, the acquisition of water treatment, electrical and fuel distribution equipment, the replacement of office furniture and higher costs for the landscaping contract.

42. With regard to the increase resulting from the implementation of a new contract for landscaping services, the Advisory Committee was informed that the current costs of the landscaping contract amounted to $175,000 and were expected to increase to $310,000. The Committee was further informed that the existing landscaping contract included in the approved budget for 2016/17 covered services for an area of 54,000 m2, whereas the contract included in the proposed budget for 2017/18 would cover an area of 621,000 m2 and include services for landscaping, irrigation networks, weed clearance, grounds keeping and maintenance. **The Advisory Committee is of the view that the information provided raises further questions regarding the significant increase in the area to be covered and additional landscaping services to be provided under the new landscaping contract. Further explanations were not provided in time for the issuance of the present report. The Committee therefore requests the Secretary-General to provide further explanations to the General Assembly at the time of its consideration of the agenda item. The Committee also expects the Secretary-General to provide details on the services provided under the landscaping contracts in 2016/17 and 2017/18 in the context of the relevant performance reports.**

43. The proposed requirements for petrol, oil and lubricants under facilities and infrastructure for the 2017/18 period amount to $7,467,300, representing an increase of $396,700 (5.6 per cent) compared with the apportionment of $7,070,600 for 2016/17. The Secretary-General indicates that the increased requirements are attributable to the higher estimated cost for diesel fuel of $0.43 per litre, compared with $0.41 per litre applied in the approved budget for the 2016/17 period. However, in the budget document (A/71/765 and Corr.1, para. 71), it is indicated that efficiency initiatives under facilities and infrastructure are expected to result in reduced energy consumption ($170,300) owing to: (a) the replacement of 564 air conditioning systems with an estimated efficiency gain of $128,300; (b) the replacement of generators and lighting systems with an estimated efficiency gain of

$23,500; and (c) the implementation of 300 solar panels with an estimated efficiency gain of $18,500.

44. The Advisory Committee requested further information on the proposed increase in the requirements for fuel under facilities and infrastructure in 2017/18 with a breakdown of the budgeted total number of litres of fuel and unit costs, as well as explanations on the reasons for the increase in the proposed volume of fuel given the reduction in the number of generators as well as the implementation of additional solar panels. The Committee was provided with the following table providing an analysis of the proposed generator fuel cost estimates, inclusive of requirements for diesel fuel for heaters.

Analysis of generator fuel cost estimates

(United States dollars)

Usage	*Fuel price 2017/18, per litre (proposed budget)*	*Litres of fuel 2017/18 (proposed budget)*	*Cost 2017/18 (proposed budget)*	*Fuel price 2016/17 (approved budget)*	*Litres of fuel 2016/17 (approved budget)*	*Cost[a] 2016/17 (approved budget)*	*Variance*	
							Volume (litres)	*Cost*
Generators (United Nations-owned equipment)	0.430	7 886 180	3 391 057	0.415	7 927 048	3 288 345	(40 868)	102 712
Generators (Contingent-owned equipment)	0.430	8 053 993	3 463 217	0.415	8 074 942	3 349 695	(20 949)	113 522
Heaters	0.430	129 626	55 739	0.415	23 129	9 595	106 497	46 145
Total		**16 069 799**	**6 910 014**		**16 025 119**	**6 647 635**	**44 680**	**262 379**

[a] Slight differences are attributable to the rounding of fuel price.

45. The Committee was informed that the increase in the volume of fuel included in the proposed budget for the 2017/18 period was primarily associated with the increased requirements for diesel fuel for heaters, resulting from anticipated longer cold weather patterns during the 2017/18 period. **The Advisory Committee is not convinced by the justification provided and recommends against approval of the proposed increase of 106,497 litres for generator fuel.**

Official travel

46. The proposed resources for official travel amount to $1,135,000 reflecting an increase of $281,000 (32.9 per cent) compared with the apportionment of $854,000 for 2016/17. The Advisory Committee was informed that the proposed amount comprised $804,000 for non-training related travel and $304,000 for training related travel. The Secretary-General indicates that the increased requirements were mainly attributable to: (a) temporary duty assignment to the Kuwait Joint Support Office to support the centralization of finance/payroll functions (see paras. 47-51 below); (b) supply chain conferences regarding central warehousing, fuel and rations management and global systems contracts; (c) travel related to the decommissioning of Galileo; and (d) travel related to the coordinators for the rotation of troop-contributing countries to streamline the monitoring of baggage and cargo loading operations. Upon enquiry the Advisory Committee was further provided with a breakdown of the proposed additional resources of $281,000 under official travel for the 2017/18 period, including the cost of tickets and daily subsistence allowance for each of the above four requirements, which are summarized in the table below. The Committee was informed that the remaining additional requirements of $115,539 were attributable to other official travel requirements in connection with the Force.

(United States dollars)

Purpose of trip	*Ticket*	*Daily subsistence allowance*	*Total*
Temporary duty assignment to the Kuwait Joint Support Office to support the centralization of finance/payroll functions	4 608	76 176	80 784
Supply chain management conferences regarding central warehousing, fuel and rations management and global systems contracts	1 902	2 695	4 597
Travel for the decommissioning of Galileo	7 112	16 212	23 324
Coordinators for the rotation of troop-contributing countries to streamline the monitoring of baggage and cargo loading operations	27 172	29 584	56 756
Additional requirements attributable to other official travel requirements in connection with the Force	–	–	115 539
Total	**40 794**	**124 667**	**281 000**

47. **The Advisory Committee notes that no explanation is provided for additional requirements in the amount of $115,539, or some 42 per cent of the proposed increase of $281,000 under official travel, reflecting almost 19 per cent of the overall requirements proposed for official travel for the 2017/18 period.**

48. With regard to the proposed resources for temporary duty assignment to the Kuwait Joint Support Office to support the centralization of finance/payroll functions, the Advisory Committee was informed that the provision for travel had been estimated on the basis of four individuals travelling for a total of 368 days (4 x 92 days) during the 2017/18 period. This represented a general provision to ensure that there is adequate capacity available to support the centralized payroll process during the period. The actual travel requirement would depend upon the peak workload demand that arises during the period, which will also determine the level of capacity, skills and capabilities that will be required to address such demands. **The Advisory Committee is of the view that there is a lack of clarity on the purpose and duration of the proposed temporary duty assignment, as well as on the need for four individuals to travel to Kuwait.** The Advisory Committee discusses the centralization of finance/payroll functions further in paragraphs 55 to 59 below.

49. The Advisory Committee was also provided with details on travel undertaken in 2015/16 and proposed for 2017/18. The data provided for 2017/18 shows, inter alia, that multiple trips of a long duration (between 14 and 21 days) are planned and that in several cases two or more staff travel to workshops. The information provided did not allow the Committee to ascertain whether travel would be undertaken using business class or economy class. **Based on its review of the detailed information on the trips proposed for 2017/18, the Committee is of the view that insufficient justification has been provided in support of the requirements proposed, and that further efforts can be made to optimize travel costs, both in terms of the number and duration of trips as well as in the number of individuals travelling on the same trip.**

50. With regard to the 16-day advance purchase policy, the Advisory Committee was informed that, of a total of 807 trips undertaken in 2015/16, 324 trips or 40.1 per cent were in compliance, whereas 483 trips or 59.9 per cent were not in compliance. **In this regard, the Advisory Committee expects the Secretary-**

General to continue to pursue vigorous efforts to improve the Mission's compliance rate with the 16-day advance purchase policy.

51. **In view of its observations and comments in paragraphs 47 to 50 above, the Advisory Committee considers that the proposed requirements for official travel are significantly overstated. The Committee therefore recommends an overall reduction of 20 per cent under the proposed resources for official travel for the 2017/18 period. The Advisory Committee further recommends that the Secretary-General be requested to introduce additional measures for optimizing travel and ensuring judicious use of travel resources, and to report on those efforts in his next budget proposal.**

52. **Subject to its recommendations in paragraphs 32, 33, 36, 45 and 51 above, the Advisory Committee recommends approval of the Secretary-General's proposals under operational costs.**

4. Other matters

Redeployment of funds

53. The budget performance report indicates that during the 2015/16 period a total amount of $2,630,000 was redeployed from group I, military and police personnel, to group III, operational costs (see A/71/640, para. 31). The report states that the redeployment of funds was mainly related to additional requirements of $2.5 million for naval transportation to honour payments under a letter of assist for two contingents related to their services for the Maritime Task Force. The redeployment had been possible because of reduced requirements under military and police personnel resulting from a higher than budgeted actual average vacancy rate for military contingents (see para. 4 (a) above).

54. **While acknowledging that there may be a need to redeploy funds within budgetary periods in cases where mandates have changed or where there is an urgently arising operational need, the Advisory Committee stresses that underexpenditures in the budget do not automatically justify the use of available funds for unbudgeted purposes. As a general rule, unspent balances should be returned to Member States.** The Advisory Committee's observations and recommendations relating to the redeployment of funds between and within expenditure groups within the budget period are contained in its report on cross-cutting issues related to peacekeeping operations (A/71/836).

Centralization of payroll

55. The Secretary-General indicates that following the implementation of Umoja, payroll processing for all field-based national staff and uniformed personnel has been centralized at the Regional Service Centre in Entebbe, Uganda, and the Kuwait Joint Support Office and that, effective November 2016, payroll for UNIFIL national staff is being processed by the Kuwait Joint Support Office. The Secretary-General further states that one post of Finance/Budget Officer (P-3) and two posts of Finance Assistant (national General Service) have been relocated to Kuwait and that this temporary arrangement will remain in effect pending a decision by the General Assembly on the global service delivery model (A/71/765 and Corr.1, para. 38). Upon enquiry, the Advisory Committee was informed that the functions of the above three posts included running monthly payroll batches, supporting the monitoring and monthly maintenance of payroll systems and all ongoing activities related to ensuring a coordinated and timely execution of the payroll.

56. In addition, as indicated in paragraph 48 above, the proposed budget contains a provision of $80,784 to provide for four individuals travelling for a total of 368

days (4 x 92 days) during the 2017/18 period on temporary duty assignment to the Kuwait Joint Support Office. The Advisory Committee was informed that these staff would support the relocated team and troubleshoot payroll transactional issues during the 2017/18 period.

57. Upon enquiry, the Advisory Committee was informed that the implementation of Umoja as a single integrated system across all missions had enabled the Organization to centralize payroll processing for all field-based national staff and uniformed personnel at the Kuwait Joint Support Office. During the 2016/17 period, UNIFIL staff had travelled to Kuwait to assist with the centralization of payroll services in the Kuwait Joint Support Office. Given that the initial pilot for the deployment of Umoja was conducted at UNIFIL, the mission's staff had developed their skills as local process experts with the necessary experience and technical knowledge required to support the centralization of the payroll process.

58. **The Advisory Committee reiterates that while it does not object to an interim arrangement to support the implementation of Umoja in accordance with General Assembly resolution 70/248 A, any changes to the existing and future service delivery model must be approved by the Assembly (A/71/595, para. 55).** The Committee's observations and recommendations with respect to the Kuwait Joint Support Office are found in its report on cross-cutting issues related to peacekeeping operations (A/71/836).

59. **In this connection, the Advisory Committee trusts that the Secretary-General will provide clarification on the methodology applied in estimating Umoja benefits realization, including how the additional costs, for instance the travel costs related to the centralization of the payroll function (see para. 48 above), are factored into the estimates of benefits. The Advisory Committee also trusts that a comprehensive picture of all such costs will be included in the next progress report on the implementation of Umoja.**

Environmental initiatives

60. Information on the action taken by UNIFIL in response to the request made by the General Assembly in its resolution 70/286 (para. 31) that the Secretary-General continue his efforts to reduce the overall environmental footprint of each peacekeeping mission is provided in section VI of the proposed budget. The Secretary-General indicates that, as a leader in environmental management among United Nations peacekeeping missions, UNIFIL will continue to provide technical environmental support services, including to other missions. The mission will also conduct environmental assessments, test its environmental contingency plan twice a year, ensure a timely response to environmental incidents, and conduct environmental awareness-building activities. It will also undertake a number of environmental initiatives, such as the replacement of old generators and air conditioning systems with environmentally friendly new units, the installation of solar panels, the disposal of hazardous/medical items in accordance with the environmental policies of the host country, the replacement of metal wastewater treatment plants by concrete units to eliminate possible leaks, the replacement of prefabricated ablution units, and the replacement of old lighting systems with energy efficient equipment (see A/71/765 and Corr.1, para. 13). The mission also proposes resources under consultants related to the implementation of the Rapid Environment and Climate Technical Assistance Facility project. The Advisory Committee discusses environmental matters, including the project, further in its cross-cutting report on peacekeeping operations (A/71/836).

61. **The Advisory Committee notes the environmental initiatives planned by UNIFIL and encourages the Mission to continue to pursue its efforts to reduce**

the overall environmental footprint of UNIFIL as requested by the General Assembly in its resolutions 69/307 and 70/286. The Committee trusts that more detailed information on the implementation of the environmental initiatives will be included in future budget reports.

Mine action services

62. Upon request for further information on demining arrangements, the Advisory Committee was informed that UNIFIL currently had at its disposal six mine-clearance teams and two explosive ordnance disposal teams from two contingents. The demining units from troop-contributing countries supported implementation of Security Council resolution 1701 (2006) by conducting demining activities directly related to the operational requirements of UNIFIL. This included breaching of minefields within the framework of the tripartite Blue Line marking project and other demining activities ensuring freedom of movement of United Nations contingent personnel in the accomplishment of their respective mandated tasks.

63. The Committee was further informed that during the 2017/18 period it was envisioned that the Mine Action Service in Lebanon would continue to conduct quality assurance, training and validation for UNIFIL troop-contributing countries' demining teams, ensuring that UNIFIL demining assets are operating in accordance with international mine action standards. The Mine Action Service would also continue to support mine risk education initiatives for local populations in cooperation with the UNIFIL Civil Affairs Section and the Lebanese Mine Action Centre. The Committee discusses demining further in its report on cross-cutting issues related to peacekeeping operations (A/71/836).

V. Conclusion

64. The actions to be taken by the General Assembly in connection with the financing of UNIFIL for the period from 1 July 2015 to 30 June 2016 are indicated in section V of the performance report (A/71/640). **The Advisory Committee recommends that the unencumbered balance of $24,934,600 for the period from 1 July 2015 to 30 June 2016, as well as other income and adjustments amounting to $11,308,400 for the period ended 30 June 2016, be credited to Member States.**

65. The actions to be taken by the General Assembly in connection with the financing of UNIFIL for the period from 1 July 2017 to 30 June 2018 are indicated in section V of the proposed budget (A/71/765 and Corr.1). **Taking into account its recommendations in paragraphs 32, 33, 36, 45 and 51 above, the Advisory Committee recommends that the estimated budget requirement be reduced by $2,349,900 from $494,771,300 to $492,421,400. Accordingly, the Advisory Committee recommends that the General Assembly appropriate an amount of $492,421,400 for the maintenance of the Force for the 12-month period from 1 July 2017 to 30 June 2018.**

Documentation

- Report of the Secretary-General on the budget performance of the United Nations Interim Force in Lebanon for the period from 1 July 2015 to 30 June 2016 (A/71/640)
- Report of the Secretary-General on the budget for the United Nations Interim Force in Lebanon for the period from 1 July 2017 to 30 June 2018 (A/71/765 and Corr.1)
- Financial report and audited financial statements for the 12-month period from 1 July 2015 to 30 June 2016 and report of the Board of Auditors, Volume II, United Nations peacekeeping operations (A/71/5 (Vol. II)
- Report of the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions on observations and recommendations on cross-cutting issues related to peacekeeping operations (A/71/836)
- General Assembly resolution 70/280 on the financing of the United Nations Interim Force in Lebanon
- Security Council resolutions 425 (1978), 426 (1978), 1701 (2006) and 2305 (2016)
- Report of the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions on the budget performance for the period from 1 July 2014 to 30 June 2015 and proposed budget for the period from 1 July 2016 to 30 June 2017 of the United Nations Interim Force in Lebanon (A/70/742/Add.8)

Annex

Reversed rotation of troops[a]

1. The rotation of contingent personnel may be conducted as a direct or reversed rotation. In the case of a direct rotation, the air operator will first position the aircraft in the country of the rotating contingent, where the flight will initiate and then proceed to the mission area. For a reversed rotation, the air operator positions the aircraft in the mission area, from where the flight is initiated and the passengers are flown first from the mission to the country of the contingent. The benefit with regard to reversed rotation is the proximity of the air operator to the mission, which allows for optimized positioning and depositioning of aircraft and avoids long-haul empty flights. However, reversed rotations require accurate risk analysis to ensure that the operations performed by the rotating units are not adversely affected. Accordingly, reversed rotation may be implemented only when the mission is capable of sustaining the operations and the financial benefits outweigh the operational challenges.

2. The geographical location of UNIFIL is particularly suited to use reversed rotation as there are a number of air operators registered with the United Nations that are located in the relative vicinity of the mission area. The distance required to position the aircraft from an air operator's home base in close proximity to UNIFIL is much shorter for a reversed rotation, compared to positioning the aircraft in the country of the contingent for a direct rotation.

3. Reversed rotation is considered for application in other missions on a case-by-case basis, depending on mission requirements and the units being rotated. Reversed rotations have taken place and are anticipated for the periods 2016/17 and 2017/18, respectively, for UNIFIL.

[a] Information provided by the Secretariat.